

DIXIE TRANSPORTATION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (DTEC)
MINUTES
April 15, 2015

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

Zachary Renstrom, County Commission
Chairman Chris Hart, Ivins Mayor
Vice Chairman Jon Pike, St. George Mayor
Darren LeFevre, Toquerville Mayor
Wayne Peterson, Leeds Mayor
Bette Arial, St. George City Council, Senator Mike Lee's Office
Ken Sizemore, Santa Clara City Council
Jimmie Hughes, St. George City Council
Jeff Turek, Washington City Council

OTHERS PRESENT

Arthur LeBaron, Hurricane City
Kyle Gubler, LaVerkin City Administrator
Gary Webster, Cong. Chris Stewart's Office
Bill Swadley, Senator Orrin Hatch's Office
Ken Trevort,
Dana Meier, UDOT
Myron Lee, Dixie MPO
Dave Demas, Dixie MPO
Levi Roberts, Dixie MPO
Curt Hutchings, Five County AOG
Dave Glenn, Ivins City
Mike Shaw, Washington City
Jen Boyack, Hurricane City
Jordan Merrill, SW Public Health
Tim Tobin, Southern Utah Bicycle Alliance

EXCUSED

Naghi Zeenati, Utah Transportation Commission, Region 4
Bryan Thiriot, Five County AOG
Rick Torgerson, UDOT

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Chris Hart welcomed all in attendance and introductions were made. It was established that a quorum exists for voting on action items.

BUSINESS

A. Approval of Minutes from March 18, 2015

MOTION: Motion by Jimmy Hughes to Approve the Minutes from the March 18, 2015, DTEC meeting. Motion seconded by Ken Sizemore and carried by unanimous vote.

LONG RANGE PLANNING

A. Local Option Tax Analysis

Myron presented two (2) handouts, representing what House Bill 362 achieves for transportation: a 5 cent per gallon gas tax increase for the B&C fund, as well as an additional local option sales tax.

The existing per gallon fuel tax brings in about six million dollar (\$6 million) dollars a year to the County, which is allocated between the cities and the County according to the B & C Road Fund formula. With the five cent (\$.05) per gallon gas tax increase recently passed by the State Legislature, the revenue streams will increase by about twenty percent (20%) beginning January 1, 2016.

HB 362 also includes a Local Option Sales Tax of up to one quarter of one percent. According to the formulas in the new legislation, the Utah League of Cities and Towns came up with a figure that would potentially be distributed to the cities and counties. The handouts show the amount of money expected assuming that all twenty nine (29) counties pass the tax and based on calendar year 2014 sales. A portion of money would go to the Transit District, however, if there is not a transit service rendered by the cities, the money that would have been allocated to transit would be given to the County until a Transit District is formed.

Myron asked committee members if they think the Local Option Sales Tax would be on the ballot this fall, or in a future year. He went on to explain that the figures that would result from the tax increase were presented to the MPO Advisory Committee. Their response was that they didn't want to push DTEC one way or the other, although, due to their strapped transportation budgets, they would be able to use the funds responsibly to improve the transportation systems in the respective cities.

Commissioner Zachary Renstrom stated that the consensus among the business community is that they do not want the tax unless all counties are on board. When sales tax is higher in one city vs. another it can hurt businesses since the public will travel elsewhere to save a few hundred dollars. Mr. Renstrom mentioned that the vast majority of the counties are not considering it at this time. Another concern is that it is too soon for the County since the Recreation Arts, and Parks (RAP) Tax was just passed. In order for the County to consider it further, each of the cities need to adopt a resolution stating that they are in favor of the increase, which shows community

support. With no time limit on the local tax option it can be presented to the public to vote on at a future date.

Mayor Hart asked if the consensus was to hold off to see how the additional fuel tax revenue does in helping to satisfy the growing needs before we look at implementing anything else.

Commissioner Renstrom suggested that the additional fuel tax revenue should be looked at first because if fuel increases, then the fuel tax revenue increases as well. If the public is asked too soon to vote for another increase and it fails then it would be difficult to pass it later on. Thus, waiting until there is a legitimate option of it passing seems to make the most sense.

Mayor Pike is concerned because the public also mentions that they want more bus routes and shorter times between pickups and unless the Local Option Sales Tax is passed, transit money is not received. The roads are currently in good shape but will deteriorate over time. He believes that by waiting too long the public will want an explanation when the shortfalls become apparent. He continued by saying that even if it went before the public early on and it was voted against, at least the public would be aware of the repercussions.

Commissioner Renstrom mentioned that the Utah Association of Counties (UAC) suggested that it be put on a municipal election as statistics show that to be the most likely chance of it passing.

Arthur LeBaron stated there is a lot of money needed in the long range plan and the planning assumption includes this revenue.

Mayor Peterson expressed that the projects on the long range plan are needed and if the increase is delayed, it becomes more dramatic by having to potentially increase the amount initially sought, to make up the difference for the shortfall by not asking for it sooner. He expressed that it might be a harder argument two (2) or three (3) years down the road to gain support for a tax increase that the legislature passed this year and the public wondering why they weren't asked to support it sooner.

Mayor Hart explained that it wasn't too early to launch a campaign in support of this and a discussion ensued of how to go about this amongst the cities. The residents expect roads to be maintained and an operational trail system for bikers and pedestrians and this takes money to accomplish. The cities and the County cannot spend tax payer dollars to advertise for a tax increase. It will take groups like the cycling alliance to help the public to understand the reasons behind the tax increase.

Mr. Renstrom thought that the cities should be putting this on their City Council agendas to start talking about regularly. He wondered if the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) or UDOT can do anything to advertise since the cities and the County cannot spend tax payer dollars.

Ken Sizemore mentioned that as Southern Utah grows, at some point, Sun Tran needs to go from a city operated entity to some kind of interlocal entity. He went on to say that the education campaign concerning the Optional Sales Tax increase should also include education about the transit system and what it will take to expand regionally.

(See attached for handouts)

B. Regional Active Transportation Plan Update

Levi Roberts handed out the Dixie MPO Regional Active Transportation Plan booklet. He stated that a component of the Regional Transportation Plan is the Active Transportation Plan which includes bicycle and pedestrian transportation and gives recommendations for programs, policies, and facilities.

The cost to develop this plan totaled twenty five thousand dollars (\$25,000). The plan encourages the use of the trail systems that are currently in place as well as future trail systems that will better connect the cities and existing trails and is ready to be used as a guiding document for cities as they plan for bicycle and pedestrians in their area.

There are a lot of gaps in the current trail system, making it difficult for bicyclists or pedestrians to safely go to and from their destinations. As the proposed trails are implemented, this plan closes the gaps and creates a better and safer environment for the whole community.

Mr. Roberts mentioned that this plan suggests the five (5) "E's": Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, Evaluation, and Engineering. He continued by stating the next step would be for the committee to adopt the plan as an advisory document and to then have the cities use this as a resource and include it in their transportation master plan within their respective cities.

Mayor Peterson suggested that because the plan is so detailed, it would be beneficial to take a month to review.

It was determined that the Regional Active Transportation Plan be included on next month's agenda to give the Executive Committee time to review it and be prepared to make a motion.

(See attached for the booklet)

SERVICES

A. Financial Report (FY 2015) / Vote Share (FY 2016)

Mr. Lee handed out a preliminary worksheet on the FY 2016 budget. There is no anticipation of changes from FY 2015. The Dixie Transportation Executive Committee (DTEC) Vote Share has been maintained at five thousand dollars (\$5,000) per vote, and a motion needs to take place on this recommendation. St. George City has three (3) votes, LaVerkin, Toquerville and Leads share the cost of one vote, and all others have one vote. UDOT and Washington County participate through In-Kind contributions.

(See attached for the worksheet)

MOTION: Motion by Mayor Pike to Adopt the Vote Share for FY 2016. Motion seconded by Bette Arial and carried by unanimous vote.

B. Call for Planning Grants

Mr. Lee stated that the Dixie MPO receives one hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) of federal monies a year that is spent on planning projects. The bike plan that was discussed earlier was funded through this as well as; the Regional Transit Plan, the River Road study that helped St. George City and incorporated the Mall Drive underpass at the same time, and the Washington Telegraph and Green Springs study. Most of the cities within the Dixie MPO have also been able to receive help in updating and improving their long range transportation plans. In the past, funds have not been fully expended and have carried to the next year.

Mr. Lee encouraged the cities and the County to work with their Public Works directors to start the application process on any projects that is transportation-planning related. These applications are due May 29, 2015.

Mr. Sizemore mentioned that air quality is a regional issue and potentially could be considered by individual cities for planning grant money and asked Mr. Lee if there was an option to submit or set aside monies. Mr. Lee suggested that if an air quality plan was to be developed for this area regarding transportation then funds might be available for that, however, a city or a county would need to be the sponsoring agency. Mr. Sizemore questioned if the Dixie MPO could be the sponsoring agency at which point Mr. Lee expressed that to be possible.

Mr. Sizemore thought a mobile display or exhibit could be taken to the Home Builders

meeting and Transportation Expo so that the public could become educated about air quality concerns.

To discuss this further, it was decided that air quality be an item on the next agenda.

UDOT/FHWA BUSINESS

A. UDOT Updates

Dana Meier stated that the Southern Parkway project is moving along and although it is not yet open to the public, there is now a road from Washington Dam Road to Warner Valley. He mentioned a BLM pit that has been opened on the north end of the Valley and approximately ninety five percent (95%) of the material is coming from there. There has also been feedback concerning dust on the Southern Parkway. Most of the time it seems to be overwatered since there is a contractor that is being paid to water and soft spots have to be filled in, however, the wind has been terrible this last week and to let him know if there are any issues as they will get right on it.

There has been progress on the project at the intersection of Sunset and Bluff. A group was formed to look at potential innovations to determine how to deliver a project that will meet the purpose and need, yet still maintain the quality and character of St. George City. Several at-grade solutions were discussed that seemed to meet the level of service and had less impacts not only in cost but in the business community within the vicinity and more than likely a third (3rd) southbound lane will be added to Bluff Street.

B. Federal Updates

Gary Webster discussed the deadlines in passing the transportation bill and other tax issues.

Bill Swadley mentioned that Senator Orrin Hatch's Office will be meeting with the BLM Acting Director with topics of discussion being the Northern Transportation Route and the Resource Management Plan.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mayor Hart stated that JPAC representation has been Ken Sizemore and would like him to continue to attend all of the meetings. Mayor LeFevre is also willing to attend if there is a conflict in Mr. Sizemore's schedule as well as Mayor Hart who is planning on attending the meetings his schedule will allow.

Commissioner Renstrom mentioned that JPAC put him on the Committee but mentioned that if someone else wanted to take that role he would support that but JPAC should be made aware of the changes.

NEXT MEETING

Next Scheduled DTEC meeting: May 20, 2015.

ADJOURN

Having no other business, Chairman adjourned the meeting at 1:10 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Nicholle Felshaw